



AN (26)

# ESSAY

(25) CONCERNING

## Church Government,

Out of the Excellent WRITINGS

OF

CALVIN AND BEZA

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By Mr. Alexr Cunningham off to D. G. Green Agent in Glasgow

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TO THE  
MODERATE  
PRESBYTERIAN.

**W**ERE Picques and Resentments kindled unto Charity, Prejudices of Education, and Wordly Designs laid aside, RELIGION preferred to Interest, and the power of Godliness to that of Dominion; then all the powers of Hell endued with the Pharisee himself, should never make Protestants of this Reformed Church of Scotland divide about matters of Ecclesiastick Government: It is clear to a Demonstration, (such as the Nature of the thing requires) that a President Episcopacy hath the Divine Institution, the Apostolick practice, the Reception of the Primitive Church, and the Solemn Approbation of a Revelation from Heaven: This Demonstration (from Calvin and Beza themselves) is the matter of this Essay; Which I cheerfully offer to your censure and ingenuiry; Adding, my Hearty Prayers, That, Our Zion may at length be at unity within her self, serving one Lord, according to one Rule, with one Heart, and Mouth, to the Glory of GOD, the joy of Heaven, and all good Men upon Earth; The true happiness of the King and People; The good contentment of our Brethren abroad; And the Melancholy displeasure of the Adversary.

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# DEFINITIONS

## I.

**THE** Power of **ORDINATION** is that Right in the Governours of the **CHURCH**, to separate Persons duely Qualified, unto the Holy Ministry of the Gospel.

*Calvin: Instit: Lib: 4: cap: 5: Sect: 2. This is to be considered, that only the Pastors,*

and not the whole multitude laid on hands on their Ministers at Ordinations.

## II.

The power of *Jurisdiction* is that Right in the Governours of the *Church*, to make Canons which are wanting, or to Execute those already made, for the Regulation of Church-Members.

*Calvin: Titus chap: 1: verse 5: We learn indeed from this place that there was no*

such Equalitie among the Ministers of the Church, but that some One was pre-eminent in Authority and Council.

## III.

The President Bishop, is he, who from his Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, is invested with a fixed Power of (a) Ordination, Regulated by Canons, and of (b) Jurisdiction, ballanced by assisting Ministers.

(a) *Calvin: 2 Tim: chap: 1: verse 6. Paul himself declares, That he alone and no*

other Ministers with him, laid on hands on *Timothy*. (b) *Calvin: Instit: lib: 4: cap: 4: Sect: 2: What ever parts the Consul had in the Senate, the same Office did the Bishop also ayes sustain in the Meeting of Presbyters.*

## IV.

The Angel of any Church Representative, is the President Bishop over the other Ministers, within the Respective Diocess, Province, or Patriarchat.

*Beza, Rev: 2: chap: 1: & 24: v: To the Angel, that is, To the President, as*

whom it behooveth, especially to be admonished, touching those matters; and by him both the rest of his fellow Collegues, and the whole Church likeways. 24: verse, But unto you, that is, unto you the Angel the President, and the Assembly of your Collegues, and to the Rest, that is, to the whole Flock.

# POSTULATUMS

## I.

*Calvine,*  
*Luke 10: chap:*  
*1, 16, versf.*  
After the A-  
postles had re-

turned to Christ, he sent out moe secundarie Preachers: And this is the great commendation of the our ward Ministry; That CHRIST Declares, that whatsoever honour is given to his Faithful Preachers, is given to Himself.

THat the 70 Disciples (from among whom *Matthias* was called, to be ordained one of the 12: Apostles) were Persons in holy Orders in the Ministry.

## II.

*Calvine, 1 Tim:*  
*1: chap. 13: v:*  
(a) *Timothy*  
was not one of  
the common  
Ministry, but  
one next to

the Apostles, who in the frequent absence of *Paul*, was in his place, *Titus* 1. 5. Beside the ordinary Office of Pastors, *Titus* had ths charge, that he should constitute a certain Form of Church Politie and Discipline; and likewise ordain Ministers over the Churches.

THat (b) *Timothy* in the Church of *Ephesus*, & (a) *Titus* in the Church of *Cress*, were from their Offices pre-eminent to other Ministers, invested with a fixed Power of Ordination, and Jurisdiction, regulated by Canons, and ballanced by assisting Ministers.

## III.

*Calvine, Inst:*  
*lib: 4: cap: 4:*  
*sect: 2: presby-*  
ters out of  
their number

in all the cities, chose one, to whom especially they gave the title of Bishop; lest from a Parity, as useth to be, Divisions might arise. *Jerom* sayes, at *Alexandria* from *Mark* the Evangelist to *Heracles* and *Dionysius*, Presbyters always placed one in a pre-eminent degree, whom they called a Bishop.

THat for the avoiding of Schism, the Primitive Church retained the Government of one single person, pre-eminent in Office, unto other Ministers.

## IV.

*Beza, Rev:*  
*2: chap: 26: v:*  
My works, that  
is, he who shall  
faithfully per-  
form the work  
laid upon him;

For he bespeaks the Assembly of Pastors in the person of the President, to whom he promiseth Victory against all the wicked, if he rely and trust in the Authority and Power of that true and only head of the Church.

THat the Angels of the 7 Churches, written unto, in the Book of *Revelation*, are encouraged against all the devices of the ungodly, upon condition of their continuing faithfull in their Administrations.

AXIOMS

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## A X I O M S

I.

**T**HE Regular Call of any Minister already ordain-  
ed, is from an Office of an inferiour, to another  
of a Pre eminent Station.

ries after the death of the Apostles, it was the constant custom that from the Order of  
Deacons, the Presbyters were chosen, therefore commonly they have expounded this  
place, of the Advancement to a Superior Degree.

*Calvin,*  
*1 Tim: 3: 13:*  
*Because in one*  
*or two Genera-*

II.

**T**he Pre-eminence in any Office, includes a pro-  
portioned Jurisdiction, over the Officers who are un-  
der them.

*See Defini-*  
*tion, II. & III.*

III.

**T**he Divine Right is manifest, in that Ecclesiastick  
Government which is instituted by Christ, continued  
by his Apostles, retained in the Primitive Church,  
and approved from Heaven by Revelation; in sub-  
serviency to any end, wherein the well being of Chri-  
stianity is nighly concerned.

*Calvin's Inst:*  
*lib: 4: cap: 6:*  
*sect: 1: We*  
*have not be-*  
*fore touched*  
*upon the pri-*  
*macie of the*  
*Roman See;*

whence the Papists strive to prove that the Catholick Church is only with them: be-  
cause it hath not taken its Original from CHRIS I S institution, nor the custome of  
the Ancient Church, as the other Offices have done, ( viz. Bish: Presb: & Deacons  
*cap: 4: sect: 1: )* mentioned already.

IV.

**T**he want of that Government in the Church,  
which is of Divine Right, is pernicious to the Gospel,  
and Christian Religion.

*Calvin's Inst:*  
*lib: 4: cap: 3:*  
*sect: 2: For nei-*  
*ther the light*  
*and heat of the*  
*, as the Apo-*

Sun, Meat or Drink are so nourishing and sustaining this present Life  
stolick and Ministerial Office, for preserving of a Church upon Earth,

PRO.

## PROPOSITION I.

*The twelve Apostles were President Bishops over the 70. Disciples.  
Demonstration.*

**T**He President Bishop is he who from his Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, is invested with a fixed power of Ordination, Regulated by Canons, and of Jurisdiction ballanced by assisting Ministers; (by Definition III.) But in respect to the 70 Disciples, who were all in the holy Ministry, (by Postulatum I.) and from among whom Matthias was called to be of the 12. (by Postulatum I.) The sacred College of the Apostles had a fixed Pre-eminence (by Axiom I.) Invested with the power of Ordination regulated by Canons; (by Postulatum I. and Definition I.) And of Jurisdiction ballanced by Assisting Ministers; (by Axiom II.) Therefore the 12. Apostles were President Bishops over the 70. Disciples, which was the thing to be Demonstrated.

## PROPOSITION II.

*Timothy was a President Bishop over the Church of the Ephesians; and Titus over the Church of the Cretians.  
Demonstration.*

These are President Bishops who are from their Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, invested with a fixed power of Ordination, Regulated by Canons; and of Jurisdiction ballanced by assisting Ministers; (by Definition III.) But Timothy in the Church of Ephesus, and Titus in the Church of Crete, from their Offices had a pre-eminence over other Ministers, invested with a fixed power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, Regulated by Canons, and Ballanced by Assisting Ministers; (by Postulatum II.) Therefore Timothy was a president Bishop over the Church of the Ephesians, and Titus over the Church of the Cretians. Which was to be Demonstrated.

## PROPOSITION III.

*The Fathers of the Primitive Church were President Bishops.  
Demonstration.*

The Primitive Church retained the Government of one single person, pre-eminent in Office unto other Ministers; (by Postulatum III.) But the pre-eminence  
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*in any Office includes a proportioned Jurisdiction over the Officers who are under them; (by Axiom II.) And the power of Jurisdiction is fixed in the president Bishop, (by Definition III.) Therefore the Fathers of the Primitive Church were president Bishops. Which was to be Demonstrated.*

#### PROPOSITION IV.

*The President Episcopacy is approved by CHRIST in the Book of the Revelation.*

##### Demonstration.

*The 7: Angels of the 7: Churches written unto by St. John, in the Book of the Revelation, are encouraged against all the devices of the ungodly, upon condition of their continuing faithful in their Administrations; (by Postulatum IV.) But these Angels were president Bishops over other Ministers within their respective Churches; (by Definition IV.) Therefore the president Episcopacy is approved by CHRIST, in the Book of the Revelation. Which was to be Demonstrated.*

#### COROLLARIE I.

*The President Episcopacy is of Divine Right.*

##### Demonstration.

*The Divine Right is manifest, in that Ecclesiastick Governement which is instituted by CHRIST, and continued by his Apostles, retained in the Primitive Church, and approved by CHRIST, by a Revelation from Heaven, for subserviency to any end, wherein the well-being of Christianity is highly concerned; (by Axiom III.) But the President Episcopacy was instituted by CHRIST; (by Proposition I.) Continued by His Apostles; (by Proposition II.) Retained in the Primitive Church; (by Proposition III.) And approved by CHRIST, by a Revelation from Heaven; (by Proposition IV.) For avoiding of Schism wherein the well-being of Christianity is highly concerned; (by Postulatum III.) Therefore the President Episcopacy is of Divine Right. Which was to be Demonstrated.*

CORO.